

VIDEO GAME MASK

5 CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims priority to U. S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/371,402, entitled VIDEO GAME MASK filed on February 21, 2003 the content of which is incorporated herein by reference.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

FIG. 1 shows a transparent shell designed to envelope the controller of an XBOX and its actuator buttons. Preferably, the shell is molded as a thin non-rigid clear plastic product so it can bend to conform closely to the shape of the controller with essentially no space between them. As a result the shell is light, cheap to make, and easy to install on the controller.

The shell is injection or vacuum molded from thin plastic that conforms to the controller shape and has a visor extending forwardly toward a game console. In addition, the edges of the shell preferably wrap partially around the edges, and possibly the bottom, of the controller to secure the shell in place. Alternatively, the shell could be designed to attach to the shell by adhesive tape or the like.

FIG. 2 shows the transparent shell lying above an XBOX controller. Specifically, the shell has raised portions in registration with the protruding actuator buttons of the controller so as to receive the actuator buttons in a form-fitting manner. The raised portions permit the actuator buttons to be operated from outside the shell. The controller and its IR transmitter are visible through the transparent shell.

FIG. 3 shows the XBOX controller without a shell.

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5 In FIG. 4 the shell is fitted over on the XBOX controller. As a result, the shell envelopes the controller and its actuator buttons with essentially no space between the them. As a result, the shell does not impair the sensitivity or responsiveness of the actuators buttons. The shell protrudes beyond the front of the controller, where the 10 IR transmitter is located. The IR signal penetrates the shell on its way to the game console. The front visor portion of the shell, which is rigid enough to serve as a cantilever from the front of the controller, provides a surface for game instructions. Instead of raised portions, openings could be formed in the shell to permit the actuator buttons to be 15 operated from outside the shell. The game instructions could be painted, printed, or cemented on the front portion of the shell. Thus, the game instructions and the actuator buttons on the controller are both visible to the game player. Preferably, the background on the visor portion is painted or 20 otherwise made to blend with the background on the underlying controller.

25 FIG. 5 shows the transparent shell molded to fit the GAMECUBE controller. The shell conforms to the shape of the controller. To provide a snug fit, the shell preferably has a pocket into which the controller fits. As in the shell for XBOX, this shell has raised portions in registration with the protruding actuator buttons of the controller so as to receive the actuator buttons in a form-fitting manner. As a 30 result, the shell envelopes the controller and its actuator buttons with essentially no space between the two and the shell does not impair the sensitivity of the actuators buttons. The shell also has a front visor portion that protrudes beyond the front of the controller, where an IR transmitter is located. The IR signal can penetrate the shell 35

on its way to the game console. The front portion of the shell provides a surface for game instructions.

5 FIG. 6 shows the transparent shell molded to fit the PLAYSTATION controller. The shell conforms to the shape of the PLAYSTATION controller. To provide a snug fit, the shell preferably has a pocket into which the controller fits. As in the shell for XBOX and GAMECUBE, this shell has raised portions in registration with the protruding actuator buttons of the controller so as to receive the actuator buttons in a form-fitting manner. As a result, the shell envelopes the controller and its actuator buttons with essentially no space between the two and the shell does not impair the sensitivity 10 of the actuators buttons. The shell also has a front visor portion that protrudes beyond the front of the controller, where an IR transmitter is located. The IR signal can penetrate the shell on its way to the game console. The front visor portion of the shell provides a surface for game 15 instructions.

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In each case, the instructions preferably comprise color coded (e.g., circular) markers and instructions for operating the actuator buttons that match the colors of the actuator buttons as illustrated in FIGS. 4 to 6.

25 FIG. 7 shows another transparent shell adapted for the PLAYSTATION controller. In this case, most of the shell, except for the portions overlying the acutator buttons, bear static graphics related to the theme of the game, in this case ASpiderman®, in addition to game instructions.

30 FIG. 8 illustrates how multiple instruction sheets can be used one at a time to match the particular game being played or the game level. A single shell is molded with a surface that receives the selected instruction sheet and holds it by means of static electricity or releasable tape. Alternatively

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the shell is molded with registration guides that accept instruction sheets one at a time.

5 FIG. 9 shows in sequential steps how a controller is inserted in a pocket shaped shell. The pocket has an opening at its visor end (facing upward) for receiving the controller. As shown on the left, the shell approaches the controller in the direction of the arrow. As shown in the middle, the shell 10 slides into the open end of the pocket. As shown on the right, the controller is fully contained in the pocket in the installed position of the shell.

With regard to the intrinsic look and feel of the GAMESKIN itself, the following can be accomplished:

15 GAMESKIN=s can be clear or solid in color either by painting, printing, silk screening or by using solid colored plastic in the vacu-forming or injection molding process.

20 GAMESKIN=s can be branded with advertising; information on game play, game theme, logos etc., via the methods described above.

25 EXAMPLES BB SONY PICTURES could use the Spiderman theme to create a skin for the Spiderman Sony Playstation Game that incorporates the look and feel of the Spiderman Property along with instructions on game play. See included comp given to you last week.

30 The NFL or other franchises BB could create GAMESKINS for all teams with team logos.

35 McDonalds could team with motion picture companies and give away a co-branded GAMESKIN, which includes their logo, with meal purchase.

5 With regard to the instructions on the GAMESKIN, instructions
may be:

Painted/printed/silk screened on the skin.

Vacu-formed in raised letters imbedded into the plastic.

10 Painted/printed/silk screened on vinyl or plastic pieces,
which are held in place via static electricity or magnets.

15 Painted/printed/silk screened on separate cards, which can
slide into grooves on the skin. This would allow the user to
interchange different instruction cards for different games
via one GAMESKIN or for various levels of play and complexity
via a branded GAMESKIN.

20 The described embodiment of the invention is only considered
to be preferred and illustrative of the inventive concept; the
scope of the invention is not to be restricted to such
embodiment. Various and numerous other arrangements may be
devised by one skilled in the art without departing from the
spirit and scope of this invention.

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